the CROSBY VOICE

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NEWSLETTER OF
THE VICTORIAN
BING CROSBY
SOCIETY.

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Hello again,

And a very happy new year to all of you.

I must start off by thanking all those people who sent me Christmas cards, especially all the Bing Crosby based cards. I don't think I've ever seen so many different treatments of Bing on Christmas cards before. Several are reproduced on these pages.

Thank you also, all those people who write to me too. I'm sorry that I don't get around to answering all your letters; it's the old problem - I simply do not have enough time in the day. Those few people with whom I do correspond, almost take it for granted that their letter will begin: "...sorry to be so long in replying..."

However, to those I don't manage to reply to, I hope that you will take this as my response. Certainly everything I have to say about Bing goes into these newsletters.

And speaking of that, let's talk about this issue. You may recall that I was a little disappointed with our November magazine. Well I'm happy to say that any disappointment I may have had then has been wiped away. In fact, I would go so far as to say that this is the best issue that we have ever produced. It is absolutely crammed with news and original articles supplied by the members!

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The Victorian Bing Crosby Society, PO Box 422, South Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. 3205.

Affiliated with The Queensland Bing Crosby Bing Society, P.O.Box 92, Ferny Hills, Queensland, Australia. 4055

Executive Committee: President - Bob Machliss. Vice-President - Ken Orren. Treasurer - Keith Dorman. Secretary - Les Saynor.

General Committee: Bill Bennett, Josie Conway, Sylvia Harding, Jim McManus and George Styles.

USA Rep: Richard Pearson, PO Box 1481, Arlington, Virginia 22210.

UK Rep: Keith Parkinson, "Meadowcroft", Houghtons Lane, Eccleston, St Helens WA 10 5 LD, England.

It's hard to know where to start, but here are a few of the highlights.

* We have for sale a unique 30 minute videotape featuring six rare short Crosby films including some home movies taken during the filming of 'King of Jazz' in 1929! See page 5.

* Last October, we joined with Crosby societies around the world in taking out a tribute ad to Bing in Variety. See page 7.

* Vern Taylor continues his fascinating series "HAIL KMH! See page 8.

* The Chronological Bing Crosby LP's are here and available to members of this Scoiety for a special price. See page 21.

* There are two great new LP's available overseas that you can also order through the club. See page 23.

* Well-known TV/Radio man Philip Brady gave us a really nice write-up in his column in "Scene" magazine. See page 30.

* The three videos featuring the musical highlights from Bing's movies are available for hire now. See page 31.

* "Collectors' Corner" this issue features our first 'guest' collector, well-known Australian Crosby man, Bill Brill, who contributes a fascinating article on the rarest Australian Crosby issues, complete with pictures! See page 33.

* "Bing - A Voice For All Seasons" finally arrived! And it was worth the wait. Read about the book on page 43.

* Member Jim Waters contributed an interesting article from the "Australian" newspaper about Nathanial Crosby's progress in the world of golf. See page 45..

* U.S. member Mark Tocher has compiled a list of records which feature "That Crosby Whistle". And there are more than a hundred! See page 48 .

* In "From Out Of the Past" this issue, we begin a very-well written article entitled "The Great Crooners", written by, of all people, Tiny Tim! But don't let that put you off. The man really knows his stuff. This article originally appeared several years ago in (blush) Playboy Magazine. See page 51.

And that's just a sample! What really pleases me is the number of original articles contributed by members. That really makes the magazine something special. Would you like to write something on Bing for us? We'll be happy to publish it. OK, off we go with Future Functions.

✪ FUTURE FUNCTIONS ✪

ANNUAL B.B.Q. SUNDAY MARCH 17TH

I've lost track of how many barbecues we've had now but they're always a success, and this one should be no exception. For a change of pace this year, we'll have ROTISSERIED ROAST BEEF, along with a great choice of salads, vegetables, bread, desserts and coffee.

Roast beef does cost a little more than chicken of course, but we have managed to keep the cost down to $8.00 a head.

In the centre of the newsletter you'll find an acceptance form. It's essential that you fill in one of these and return it to us, preferably with full payment enclosed. The caterers need to know before the day how many people they must prepare for, so could you please return the form before Friday March 8th.

Of course, in addition to the food, there will be plenty of Crosby - to listen to and to be won, on the raffles, lucky wheels, etc.

Venue, as for the past 3 years, will be the home of Wally and Maureen Carson, 5 Parker St, East Brighton. Phone 592 7310. Carving gets underway about 12.30 so get there anytime from 11.00 onwards.

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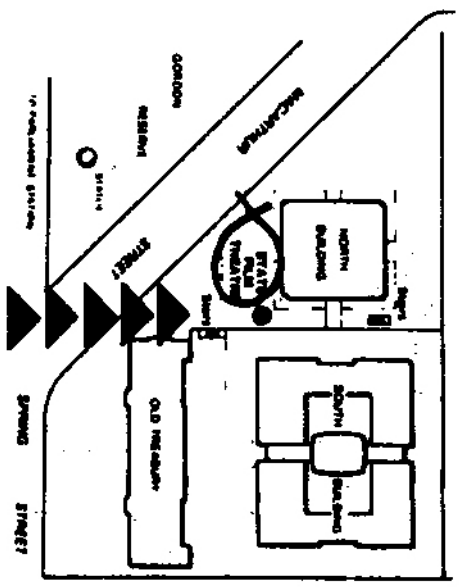
FILM EVENING, APRIL 22ND.

For our second film evening at the State Film Centre, we will be screening one of Bing's best films from the late 30's:

SING YOU SINNERS

For those who didn't come to our February 18th meeting, this map will show you where to go. Starting time will be 7.30 sharp so do try to get there a little earlier. There will be other short films of interest screened before interval. Usual admission charges apply.



THE OTHER DATES FOR '85:

JUNE 17, AUG 26, OCT 28 AND DEC 2 and it is confirmed that the State Film Centre is our home for the rest of the year!

✪ PAST FUNCTIONS ✪

MONDAY, DECEMBER 3RD, 1984 - MOVIE EVENING - "DIXIE"

Our final function for the year attarcted some 80 members and visitors and so could be considered a success. "Dixie" is one of the better Crosby movies of the period - good story, good dialogue, and good songs. Even the early Technicolour was quite watchable.

Supporting "Dixie" was Fred Astaire's feature "The Broadway Melody of 1940". Not one of Astaire's best movies, it nonetheless redeemed itself with some superb dance routines, especially the "Begin the Beguine" number with Eleanor Powell.

After some six years of using the Mobil theatrette, it was a little sad to think that this would be our last night there. We've made some good friends, particularly our projectionist, Wally Hamblin. To Wally, and to all the people at Mobil, we thank you for your help and co-operation.

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OTHER CROSBY CLUBS

* THE BING CROSBY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, (Ken Twiss), PO Box 8013, Tacoma, Washington 98408. U.S.A.

* INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE, (Reg Bristo), 7 Greenmeadow Close, Cwmbran, Gwent NP44 4 PJ, England.

* SOUTHAMPTON BING CROSBY CLUB,(Jim Newell), 17 Edwina Close, Bitterne, Southampton, Hampshire, England.

* CLUB CROSBY, (Al Sutton), PO Box 8283, Sacramento, California 95818 U.S.A.

* BINGVILLE NEWS, (John Bassett), 15 Oast Way, Rochford, Essex SS4 5PZ, England.

* BING'S FRIENDS & COLLECTORS SOCIETY, (Larry Gunn), 170 Terminal Ave Menlo Park, California 94025, U.S.A.

* KATHRYN CROSBY CLUB, (Caroline Dawson), 1374 Broadway 7D, West Somerville, MA 02144, U.S.A.

(These other clubs usually get buried at the back somewhere so I thought they deserved a mention up front for a change! BM)

GREAT VIDEO NEWS!

"RARE MOMENTS WITH BING CROSBY"

This is one of the most exciting projects that this club has been associated with during its 7½ year existence. Thanks to the dedication and generosity of Film Historian and Preservationist, Bob Deflores and the co-operation and unfailing enthusiasm of Vern Taylor (the Crosby collector's best friend in the USA), we can offer you a half hour videotape featuring six extremely rare film clips ranging from 1929 to around 1960.

Clip 1: Bing with Paul Whiteman and the members of his orchestra in 1929 on the back lot of Universal. This was a home movie made by one of the band during the group's first visit to Hollywood while the studio was still trying to fashion a suitable script. There are shots of Venuti, Lang, a long shot of Bix, Trumbauer,etc. Very appropriately, Bob Deflores has added a "soundtrack" - Bing singing "If I had a talking picture of you"!

Clip 2: Coast Guard Short - 1944-45. This long-lost film features Bing with Jimmy Grier and his orchestra singing "Don't Fence Me In". Very very rare.

Clip 3: The Fifth Freedom (1951) - in Technicolour! An unknown and unlisted Crosby film, this features Bing, Bob Hope, Perry Como and Arthur Godfrey. Bing sings "You're a Grand Old Flag" at the end of the film. A blatantly (amusingly so) propaganda short made during the Korean War, extolling the virtues of the American way of life, and also, Chesterfield Cigarettes, who produced the film. You've never seen so many people smoking and holding packets of cigarettes before! As all the above artists were Chesterfield radio and TV performers at the time, this film obviously had a very limited life. When one artist left the fold, Chesterfield certainly wouldn't want to be associated with him again. Bob Deflores found this film in an abandoned cinema in Iowa.

Clip 4: Rare newsreel footage of Bing, Rosemary Clooney and the Buddy Cole group. Bing and Rosie get to sing a complete song and they appear, much as they must have done at the time on radio.

Clip 5: Bing and Louis Armstrong - late 50's - in a video clip singing "Now You Has Jazz". A rare appearance of Bing on early TV.

Clip 6: Bing sings "Blue of the Night" from his 1931 Sennett short. A nice finish to a video of super-rare collection of material.

HOW TO ORDER YOUR COPY

The good news is that we will be able to supply everyone in every country who wants a copy, on VHS or Beta, on the PAL System or the NTSC System (for the USA).

AUSTRALIAN MEMBERS

In this particular case, we will supply the blank cassettes, to simplify ordering proceedure. The cost per dub (which covers the cost of purchasing our master dub from the USA in NTSC, having it converted to PAL, blank tape, postage, packing etc etc etc will be:

1 hour cassette: $28.00 per copy
2 hour cassette: $29.00 per copy
3 hour cassette: $30.00 per copy

Please address your orders to the Club address: PO Box 422, South Melbourne, Victoria 3205.

U.K. MEMBERS (INCLUDING EUROPE)

Please address your orders to our UK rep, Keith Parkinson, who will forward them on to us. This way, payments can be made in £££ which will simplify transactions for you. The cost (including air mail postage to the UK, will be:

1 hour cassette: £25.00 per copy

This is the only length videocassette that we will supply overseas.

Keith Parkinson's address is: 'Meadowcroft', Houghtons Lane, Eccleston, St Helens WA10 5LD.

U.S.A. MEMBERS

Please address your orders to our U.S. Rep, Richard Pearson, who will also forward them on to us. The cost, including air mail postage to the USA, will be:

1 hour cassette: US$30.00 per copy

Richard's address is PO Box 1481, Arlington, Virginia 22210.

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Any members not covered in the above, please write direct to us. PLEASE REMEMBER - STATE THE TYPE OF TAPE YOU WANT (VHS, BETA, ETC) AND WHETHER YOU WANT PAL OR NTSC! AND PLEASE BE PATIENT. OVERSEAS MEMBERS WILL PROBABLY HAVE TO WAIT 4 OR 5 WEEKS FOR THEIR ORDERS.

VARIETY

Wednesday, October 10, 1984

THE INDUSTRY HE ENRICHED FORGETS THE WORLD HE ENRICHED, REMEMBERS

BING

3rd of MAY, 1903 TACOMA. *14th OCTOBER, 1977 MADRID.*

The International Crosby Circle. Crosby Chronicles. The New Bing Crosby Colour Photoclub. Teddy Johnson's "Forever Bing" Show. Roy Chappell "A Touch Of The Bings." John McNicholas "The Chronological Bing Crosby. Tapes Exclusive. All from the United Kingdom.

Club Crosby (Sacramento). Bing Crosby Historical Society (Tacoma). Friend's of Bing and Collectors Society (San Mateo) Sheldon O'Connell "Bing — A Voice For All Seasons" (Canada) Victorian Bing Crosby Society (Melbourne) George O'Reilly (Dublin).

HAIL KMH!

BING CROSBY AND THE KRAFT MUSIC HALL

PART TWO: THE GUEST STARS

by

Vernon Wesley Taylor

REVIEWING THESE LONG-AGO FACTS AND NAMES IN A LONG-AGO MEDIUM OF ENTERTAINMENT MAY SEEM LIKE UNCOVERING OLD WELLS WITHOUT EXPECTING TO FIND WATER BUT THERE IS MORE TO IT THAN THAT; A GREATER TRUTH IS IN OPERATION HERE. TO RECALL THE PAST IS THE ONLY WAY WE CAN DISCOVER OURSELVES OR WHAT WE MIGHT BECOME. TODAY'S VAST TELEVISION INDUSTRY, THE OUTGROWTH OF NETWORK RADIO'S EXCELLENCE, IS ITSELF TO BECOME THE MODEL FOR WHATEVER FUTURE THERE MAY BE FOR BROADCAST ENTERTAINMENT. BING CROSBY'S OLD KRAFT MUSIC HALL IS A MARVELLOUS EXEMPLAR FOR A STUDY OF THIS KIND.

Beginnings are of course usually better than endings. The 'Hall' had to endure this truth also, for its time on earth ran a similiar course. Later, where it properly ought to be we will discuss the end, here we return to the beginning. Several of the programme's participants are recalling their 'old times' and where it sometimes seems as if they are responding to one another's remarks, that is because they are. Each was asked to do just that before speaking. Every other word is in the form of an interpolation and is likewise true and verifiable.

oooOOOooo

HAIL KMH! II

KEN CARPENTER:

We had all kinds of music. That is, we had opera, we had the finest classical music and popular music all mixed up. The attempt was made and carried out very successfully to break the guest artists down. That is, to make them human and talk to them in a very human and ordinary way. I recall one of the first guests we had was Rose Bampton, the famous soprano of the Metropolitan (Opera) at the time. Bing called her the 'Battling Bamp' and she loved it. I recalled we had Pablo Casals, Segovia, Rosa Ponselle, Piatagorsky, Percy Grainger, the pianist, Leopold Stokowsky, Igor Gorin...We provided for Igor, in the studio, a very large orchestra - I guess fifty or sixty pieces - just for a bit on the show. That was besides the regular band.

(Bing & Rose Bampton)

CARROLL CARROLL:

I think something should be said for the fact that John Scott Trotter was so very able and so thoroughly qualified to supply satisfactory accompaniment for the various great musicians Ken was speaking of. He could do what Jimmy Dorsey could not. Cal Kuhl, the show's producer, also had a high calibre of musicianship, and was able to laugh away any anxieties these might entertain about our rather unorthodox operation. By the time Cal left and Bob Brewster took over production, John's reputation was well established. To know him was to trust him. To work with him was a pleasure. To eat with him was a veritable paradise.

BING:

The idea was to use opera stars wherever we could, particularly if they were opera stars who were good talkers, who could do comedy.

Who were versatile enough to sing popular music so I could get in there and do a duet with them. We had any number of people from the Met. in addition to instrumentalists who toured (and were in town on occasion): Mischa Elman, Heifitzm Yehudi Menuhin...all those fellas. We even had Boris Chaliapin, which was one of the greatest thrills of my musical career. His whole body, and he was a big man, seemed to vibrate when he sang. (Bing then felt it necessary to balance the scales. He continued:) Well we had..it was an hour you know, and we had many opportunities to use popular stars also: Jazz artists, lots of female vocalists...

KEN:

Of course, we had Hollywood actors: David Niven -

CARROLL:

Niven did a guest shot on Kraft for very short dough to plug the release of his first Hollywood film. I think we paid him about five-hundred bucks . This meant he got to keep $250.00 because his contract with Sam Goldwyn said he had to split fifty-fifty of all money he made (away from) the Goldwyn lot.
In addition to the fun of working with Bing, everybody was anxious to be on the Kraft show because of the marvellous gift basket containing all the Kraft products, plus a handsome teakwood cheese tray that was given to each guest. After the show, David sent his $250.00 cheque to Goldwyn and then divided all the Kraft goodies right down the middle. He cut each hunk of cheese in half, even if they were in jars or cans. He even cut each caramel in half. Then he cut the teakwood tray in half, put everything in half the basket and sent the whole mess to Samuel Goldwyn's home. I like to think the card said, "A ticket, a tasket, here's your half of the basket".

(There was a healthy sprinking of guests who were neither singers nor actors. Rupert Hughes, the American jurist appeared on the sixth broadcast, struggling very bravely to keep pace with Bing. Amelia Earhart worked with Bing and Bob Burns, doing a very professional job of it, on a programme shortly before she took off on her last flight. Even the Mayor of Van Buren, Arkansas was asked to guest by Bob Burns (of course). Servicemen and women from generals to privates and admirals to seamen were given parts to read more than six months before the attack on Pearl Harbor. But perhaps the

(Herb Polesie impersonates a Trinidad fieldworker singing "The Dipsy Doodle" from a Westward Marching and Chowder Club show.)

most unusual non-performer of them all was one who nevertheless performed, despite himself. A little backfilling is necessary here:

There were three, altogether, of the little-known but fabulous affairs in Hollywood known as the Westward Marching and Chowder Club shows, which were put on by the songwriter Johnny Mercer and his wife, Ginger. They were done with the enthusiastic cooperation of such Mercer friends as Bing, Pat O'Brien, and Andy Devine (among many). Clam chowder could indeed be had at these noisy soirees, but more importantly, it gave such high-spirited performers a chance to kick up their collective heels in a concerted effort unmatched very often, even in Hollywood. They put on wondrous, hokey acts and routines, all of which were laid out in a long theatrical presentation. They had to have been, what the psychologists call these days, a function of the alter ego (well, maybe). Dozens of celebrities labored mightily and delightedly over songs, jokes and costumes. The second bash had upwards of twenty bits or turns, including Bing who essayed his close-to version of Bert Williams' song, 'Nobody' (who also recorded, in the early 1900's 'Anybody' and 'Somebody'). "Lifted bodily from the Bert Williams record" says the programme events folder. Bing was to delay nine years before he sang this fascinating rendition on radio - too late for KMH.

The night's performance was the Club's second 'Breakaway Minstrel Show' with many regulars and guests of KMH participating. In fact, the cast reads like a roster of the KMH payroll, plus others working at the time with Crosby. The Hall's producer, Herb Polesie, even got in the act by doing his notorious Calypso version of "The Dipsy Doodle". He was decked out in a horrible (and very funny) variation of the Trinidad fieldworker and carrying a field-drum. That autumn he was persuaded to do the guest turn on KMH and sing it again, with Bing. Apparently it was felt he would be safe from hysterical mobs of females if he appeared under his Chowder Club pseudonym of Ponch Polesie. (Owners of the KMH Listings book, recently issued by our Society, should correct Poncho's last name for his appearance on 3 November 1938 broadcast. There, it is spelled as 'Palazy'. And although the complete show is among the many missing from this era, Bing and his producer's duet can, thanks to Ed Rice, be obtained from the Society.)

KEN:

Ogden Nash...He was a shy, a terribly shy man. He couldn't bring himself to read his poetry over the air so they asked me to do it.

He said afterwards, he had never heard it done better. I lived on that for years. Bea Lillie...I had the good fortune of doing the (Double Damask Napkins' bit with her.

BING:

Carroll Carroll was adroit in fashioning scripts that fit these people. Some of them had funny accents, you know. We would do a duet, might even work Bob Burns in there and have a trio. I remember we had on one show, Irving Berlin and John Charles Thomas, and with Bob we did the quartet from Rigoletto. Of course, we had Al Jolson on many times (later). He could sing with them all.

PERRY BOTKIN:

Jolson was pretty well on his uppers as far as public-recognition was concerned. Bing booked him on our show. He electrified the listeners and Bing. The effect was that Al did just what he always did but he extended Bing's efforts. Bing always sang at about - oh, I always put him at about forty percent of his potential; he underplayed everything. Well, when Jolson was on the show and was screaming at Bing across the mike, Bing would turn on and we would get a much better performance out of him than he would have otherwise given.

JOHN SCOTT:

Songwriters or their agents would chase Bing into the studio or they would come to me and say, "When is Bing going to do my score?" I'd say "Don't ask me". I never suggested a tune to Bing the whole time I was working with him. That was the only way; I mean you could get trapped that way if it became known that you advised Bing on his songs - even once. My friends, Johnny Burke and Jimmie Van Heusen and other songwriters would come to me. But I'd always say "Don't ask me".

(Songwriters, like everybody in entertainment, realized that publicity is the life's blood in their business. They importuned Bing mercilessly. He generally complied and employed a clever method doing it.)

As an example, the 1937 picture "Double or Nothing": After the introduction, almost always by Bing himself, there would be "It's the Natural Thing to Do", then "All You Want To Do Is Dance" and "The MOon Got In My Eyes". They were all from this picture.

NBC

Then it starts: The third week away he repeats "The Moon Got in My Eyes". And so it would go on for several weeks. The guests did them, even without Bing. They had parody words, funny maybe. These songs became familiar and became identified by the public with Bing. He did marvellous things this way...like, well, one of the first Deccas I made with him, "Smarty", the "The Folks Who Live On the Hill" and "Mexicali Rose" and..."The Moon of Manakoora" and "Trade Winds". These were...well, he really could level on these kinds. But as he aged and matured, he held back a little on the love songs.

(Was Kraft Music Hall really one of the best spots on radio for the celebrity? Apparantly so.)

Many people who wouldn't broadcast on other programmes would come on the Crosby show because there was no tension. Such people as Bob Hope or Roland Young or Bob Benchley, even Madelaine Carroll could always be comfortable and at their most relaxed.

CARROLL:

It was on KMH that Jimmy Stewart played his accordian publicly for the first time. Henry Fonda debuted as a trumpet player. Also, we had Jose Iturbi dueting with Bob Burns. Just think, one of the world's finest pianists paired with a bazooka on the "Warsaw Concerto"! Jose carried the melody and Burns carried the plumbing.

(Still others took out their musical frustrations on Kraft: Jackie Cooper, the popular child actor, whined the musical saw to Bing's resolute accompaniment on his drums. Mischa Auer, the film comic, played on the concert-grand using a pair of grapefruit in place of his fingers. And though he did not get to be a guest until the very last broadcast, Trotter's drummer was drawn out of the orchestral woodwork to become the original City Slicker, Spike Jones.

But not every guest was precisely ecstatic about appearing on KMH. Mr Carroll in his bright and breezy autobiography speaks of some of them: Marlene Dietrich froze when he attempted to instruct her in her part and when he added insult to injury by announcing to her that a small but loud part of the public doubted she sang the songs from the new picture she was plugging, "Destry Rides Again", since her delivery was so different from the accustomed super-sultry vocals, the lady turned blue. Carroll, caught in the middle because the J. Walter Thompson Agency held the advertising contract for

her film studio, Universal Pictures, as well as for Kraft Cheese, struggled disconsolately with the tempremental German actress to get her to change her mind. She continued to pout until the last hours before airtime. By then, having enough of it, he telephoned her agent that they were going to get someone else to read her lines and he called Joan Bennett, another popular star. In time's nick, Marlene swept into the studio as if nothing had happened, sang her hit song from "Destry", "See What the Boys in the Backroom Will Have". She was the only guest star for the whole sixty minutes, did other songs with Bing and - where possible - without him. She was flawless.

Patsy Kelly, a then very popular actress was another balker. After reading her script, she suddenly developed laryngitis and stayed in that condition until it was learned that a reference to her "working like a man" in it would likely fuel the nasty rumour fires then singeing the fringes of her reputation. The offending line was dropped and Patsy recovered from her throat infection.)

CARROLL:

The first time Frank Sinatra made a guest appearance with Bing, Frank's opening line was, "Bing, would you do me a favour?" Bing says, "Certainly, what?" Frank said, "Retire!" I had actually engineered the small so-called feud between them. Frank was then the new kid on the block. I was not only writing Bing's show, I was also writing Frank's. It made it easy. Sinatra was always written as the brash newcomer, demanding to get in. Bing was the benign elder statesman, anxious to offer a helping hand to the upcoming talent. But it was never taken seriously. Everybody was hip to it, even the public. It was merely puffery.

BING: It was just Network publicity. We were friends.

(Because of his elaborations on the tired old station standby, Carroll was officially entitled to be known as 'the Ding Dong Daddy of KMH' among his peers.)

KEN:

He was a wonderful writer. He did the whole show. Wonderful to me, as I said. You know, when you start to get a name - it's not just when you announce the product, but when you get into the show. Well, he wrote me doing the station break and ringing the chimes - the NBC chimes. And he wrote me little things leading up to this

and (then) out of it. He wrote me other spots on the show, which was really a wonderful thing for me, and really got me going.

BING:

But we couldn't do that; bring him into the show itself because he was so good.

(There were in those days more than now, two rocks in the seas of broadcasting that were to be avoided. It was not so much because they were certain to cause the vessel to founder but simply because they were there. The Sponsor and the Censor had wrecked more than one hopeful idea. The very similarity in their names imparts a similarity in their vigil over the wallowing ships. Carroll had something to say regarding this doubtful danger.)

CARROLL:

In the old days when you were writing a radio show, of course, you wrote exactly what you pleased, what you wanted to write, as long as it didn't offend the sponsor, his wife, his friends, the tenets of good taste as defined by the networks, and all the other people on the show, especially the guests. But we knew each others likes and dislikes and we catered to all of them. Then there was the censor but we paid him no mind, except when I'd sneak a word in the script that he couldn't find in the dictionary, because I'd made it up just to have a little fun. Of course, non of these ever got on the air. Incidentally, we did not use big words as everybody said we did. What we tried to do was avoid cliches. Still, our fun words, sometimeswere near misses. We gave Mischa Elman that time a red suspenders joke. On the air, Mischa explains to Bob Burns that he always wore those red galluses while playing his violin because they helped him play better. When Bob innocently asks why, Mischa says it is because they hold his pants up. It was a lousy joke but coming unexpectedly from the hi-class musician, it broke up the joint.

(Lousy or not, it must have been popular because it was revamped on more than one occasion. Earlier, he made Bing the straightman to another classic musician named Mischa, pianist Mischa Levitsky: Mischa confesses to Bing that he played his piano better on KMH than at any of his other public performances because he could dress informally and comfortably. The following exchange ensued:

(Bing) "I'm delighted to hear it and may I say that all day long I've admired your red suspenders."

(Mischa) "A great many pianists wear red suspenders exactly like these."

(Bing) "Any particular reason?"

(Mischa) "Yes, To hold up my pants!"

CARROLL:

I might have had a little trouble with that one because the censors always got a little fidgety when the dialogue got into pants. No matter what it might be, they always hung around either making or looking for trouble.

BING:

Oh sure they did but we never gave them any trouble. Carroll did not write that kind of stuff. And anyway, you didn't want to get into a very long argument with them. They had the power. Censorship was very rigid, they had to see every script beforehand. You had to be very careful that you didn't ad lib something; it was like live broadcasting, you know.

(But even sponsors and censors are not infallible and, like anybody, Carroll Carroll responded in his autobiography with not a little glee to a certain foolish confusion that occurred in thos early years and grew thicker as it became more protracted.)

JOHN SCOTT:

But first let me say that you have to realize that he (Bing) was very important to everything. He was almost, well, let me say, sacred to the audience. So he would self-censor. He didn't try to get away with anything. If, if the - Carroll's dialogue was smooth, you know, and free from - glaring innuendo - it was certainly all planned. It was no accident. Never.

CARROLL:

After Bing had been on the air a couple of years for Kraft, memoranda started to dribble in from Chicago (headquarters) saying that certain members of the Kraft Company (or their wives) thought that the public was getting a little tired of his singing style. Now, it might have been stupid enough if they had asked us to get rid of him, but instead

they strongly suggested that we ask him to sing some other way! Seems foolish, doesn't it?

(Not knowing quite how to counter this latest menace, Carroll and the show's producer stalled, sending vague replies to their eastern office.

To say (to them) that it was nuts to be impolite, besides, what were we there for? To do as we were told, that's what. To have mentioned it to Bing would have most certainly won his instant resignation. So we batted it around, shoved it into pigeon holes, kicked it under the rug for as long as we could.

(Then a series of events took place which solved the problem. During this time, Bing was in the middle of another picture, The Starmaker, and the producer of that film sent the KMH office at NBC an acetate record of one of the film's songs in which Bing (as was sometimes wont to do, as you well know) fluffed gloriously. The song was "Jimmy Valentine", the original title being, when it first appeared a generation earlier, "Look Out For Jimmy Valentine". However, it so happened that Crosby, in an apparent effort to fit his delivery to the mood of the song, which concerns a cat-burgler, might almost be said to be essaying a new singing style. George M. Cohan tunes had done that before to other vocalists.)

CARROLL:

If you wanted to say so, that is. We d cided it didn't really sound much like Bing and, being in a reaction to the Kraft folks' silly suggestion, we wrote a long memorandum explaining technically and persuasively what we had done to convince Bing to change his style, and sent it, along with the acetate to Chicago, to W.F. Lockridge, our JWT vice-president on the Kraft account. Unfortuately, Loch was out of town, so his secretary handled the whole deal by sending our joke-letter and the record onto Jack Platt, the advertising man for the cheese company. On the assumption that Loch knew what he was doing, Jack talked to the people who had been bucking for Bing to change his style. Without listening to the record mind you, they all agreed the best way to test the 'new' Bing and get an unbiased opinion was to play it in the company cafeteria for the factory girls during their lunch hour. Somecne made an introductory speech, telling the ladies why they were going to hear the record and asking them to write their opinions for the suggestion box. Bing's voice began the verse in a breathy undertone that really didn't sound the way he usually did. When he came to the chorus, he segued into his

full voice and the girls were just beginning to understand who he was. But when he missed the rhythm and went out of sync with the music during the second chorus, the girls heard what we had meant for our interoffice ears only:

> Help!
> Oh, Jesus Christ, I blew the time
> And I'm a dirty son-of-a-bitch
> When Jimmy Valentine...

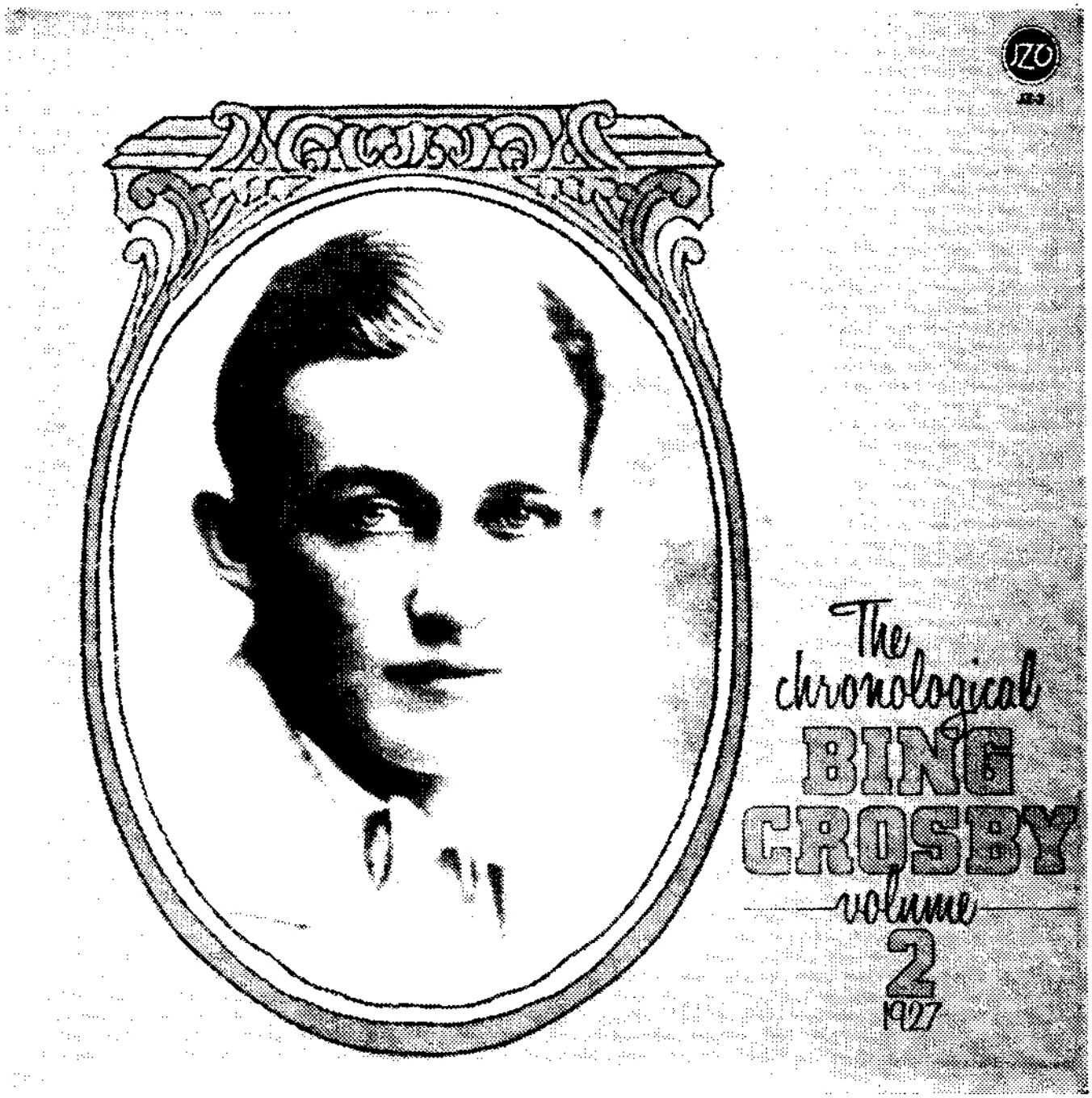
It very nearly cost J. Walter Thompson the Kraft account.

(W.F Lockridge (J.Walter Thompson), John Platt (Kraft), Bing, John U. Reber and Carroll Carroll)

****

Upwards of 800 men, women and children guested on KMH during Bing's tenure (the writer thinks there were more than that). Nothing short of a large book could mention them all and describe their experiences. This tiny sampling serves only to provide a sip of the cup, a taste of how it must have been. Little mention has been made of the later programmes. It is felt that, since many of these half hour shows are available for listening from our Society, the collector would infinitely prefer that form of exposition. Part 3 will discuss the resident comics and female singers as well as their many 'replacements'.

WELL HERE THEY ARE - the covers of the first two issues of the most exciting Crosby LP project ever - "The Chronological Bing Crosby". And I'm delighted to be able to report that these records are every bit as good as we had hoped. No fake-stereo, no echo, no artifically-boosted midrange, no nothing that wasn't on the original 78's. And every take of every record starting with "I've Got the Girl". Occasionally, there is a little surface noise, but nothing intrusive. These records are a delight.



AVAILABLE NOW THROUGH THE SOCIETY

Australian members can purchase these and all subsequent issues through this Society. The price will be a very special $10.00 per disc, which is less than retail. U.S. members can order direct from Ken Twiss of the Bing Crosby Historical Society. Australian members, if you order by mail, please add $3.00 for packing and postage. Volume 3 in the series may be out by the time you get this magazine. Please enquire.

RECORD ORDERS

(For contents details, please see over page)

On these pages, we feature two new LP releases which the Club is prepare to order for you. The arrangement is that you send us your payment for the nominated amount; when all the orders are in, we place a bulk order with the overseas distributor, then your records are AIR MAILED to you. We have found this to be the quickest and most satisfactory method of supplying new records for members.

FINAL DEADLINE FOR ORDERS FOR THESE RECORDS IS FRIDAY MARCH 15TH. Any orders received after this time will be returned.

THE RARE ONES

FEATURING
18 OF BING CROSBY'S
RAREST RECORDINGS

Songs Never Before On Domestic Album

AT LEFT: THROUGH THE YEARS, Volume 2. COST: $13.50

ABOVE: THE RARE ONES COST $12.50

Unfortunately, we can't supply members in other countries. "Through the Years" is available from John Joyce, 21 Birchfield Gardens, Low Fell, Gateshead, NE9-7YJ, England. "The Rare Ones" is available from, Stan Hester, Blue Lantern Records, PO Box 244, Milford, Michigan, USA 48042. Best to write first for your local price.

NEW RELEASES

THROUGH THE YEARS, Vol 2

This excellent LP is highly recommended for anyone with even the slightest interest in collecting Crosby. It features no less than 18 tracks - taken from radio, private records, rehersal records for commercial issues, rare movies, etc.

Sing a Song of Sunbeams (rehersal), Corinne Corrina (parody), Hail KMH! (from radio), Get Yourself a Phonograph (deleted from Emperor Waltz), The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi (rehersal), Many Happy Returns KELK (radio), The Little White Pill on the Little White Hill (movie), Idaho - fighting song, Where the Turf Meets the Surf (radio), Early American (film), Mandy (rehersal). The following are all commercial tracks not reissued on LP: Save Your Sorrow For Tomorrow, Ain't Doing Bad Doing Nothing, Pretty Baby, Ida I Do, You Took Advantage of Me (rejected), I still Suits Me, Mandy is Two.

THE RARE ONES, Broadway Intermission BR-128

I've Got The Girl, Poor Butterfly, Face the Music Medley, Learn to Croon, Don't Break the Spell, O'l Man River (1941 version), Angels of Mercy, By the Loght of the Silvery Moon, But Not For Me, Iowa, Early American, Dear Friend, Thanks (with Phil Crosby), Why Do I Like You, Silent Night (rare 1935 version), Adeste Fidelis (rare 1934 version), White Christmas (1942 version), and finally, Bing introducing the songs from "Top of the Morning".

The American LP also brings togethr a rare collection of commercial issues, and is also highly recommended. Both the above can be purchased through this society. (See previous pages)

BING WITH THE GUS ARNHEIM BAND ON RADIO, Take 2 Records, 2T 112.

Unfortunately, I don't have a copy of this record yet; however, it does exist. I'm not sure about the title either, although the catalogue number is correct. This disc features extracts from a 1931 broadcast, the MJB Demitasse Review, which featured the Arnheim Band. Bing features on two of the tracks - "Out Of Nowhere" and a song I don't know called "What Is It?". We may order copies if the quality is good. In the meantime, why not write to Take 2 Records, PO Box 36729, L.A. California 90036, USA.

RETURN TO PARADISE ISLANDS, Reprise from Japan, P7703

Here's a rare one, re-issued in that great Crosby-fan country, Japan! Recorded in the mid-60's it did not sell well and was withdrawn from circulation after a year or two. After Bing's death, literally dozens of Crosby LP's were reissued and this one was conspicuous by its absence! Not my favourite Crosby disc either, but well worth having for your collection. The re-issue is in stereo too.

BING CROSBY IN THE THIRTIES, Vol 1. JSP Records - JSP 1076

This U.K. release has some interesting material. Included are the versions of "Please" and "Here Lies Love" from the promo disc for "The Big Broadcast". There are also some early KMH tracks including "Some of These Days" and "With All My Heart" from the earliest available KRAFT broadcast. The balance of the disc is made up of other KMH material. No other details at this time.

BING CROSBY AND FRIENDS, Vol 2, Magic/AWE 10

Another LP from England, this one featuring duets from radio broadcasts with such artists as Peggy Lee, Groucho Mark, Jimmy Durante, Bob Hope, Danny Kaye, Burl Ives and many others. Quality of reproduction apparently leaves something to be desired.

JUDY GARLAND IN HOLLAND, Vol 3, Obligato/GIH 6100

Mostly Judy, but Bing joins her on Limehouse Blues, April in Paris, Isle of Capri, Any Town is Paris and How Could You Believe? Once again, sound quality is believed to be poor.

ELJER'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY ALBUM 1904-1979, RCA Special Products

Produced by RCA in the USA for the Eljer Plumbing Fixtures 75th anniversary, this disc features a variet of RCA artists, and, would you believe, the Rhythm Boys singing "Mississippi Mud"! I haven't picked up a copy and I'm not sure that I want to.

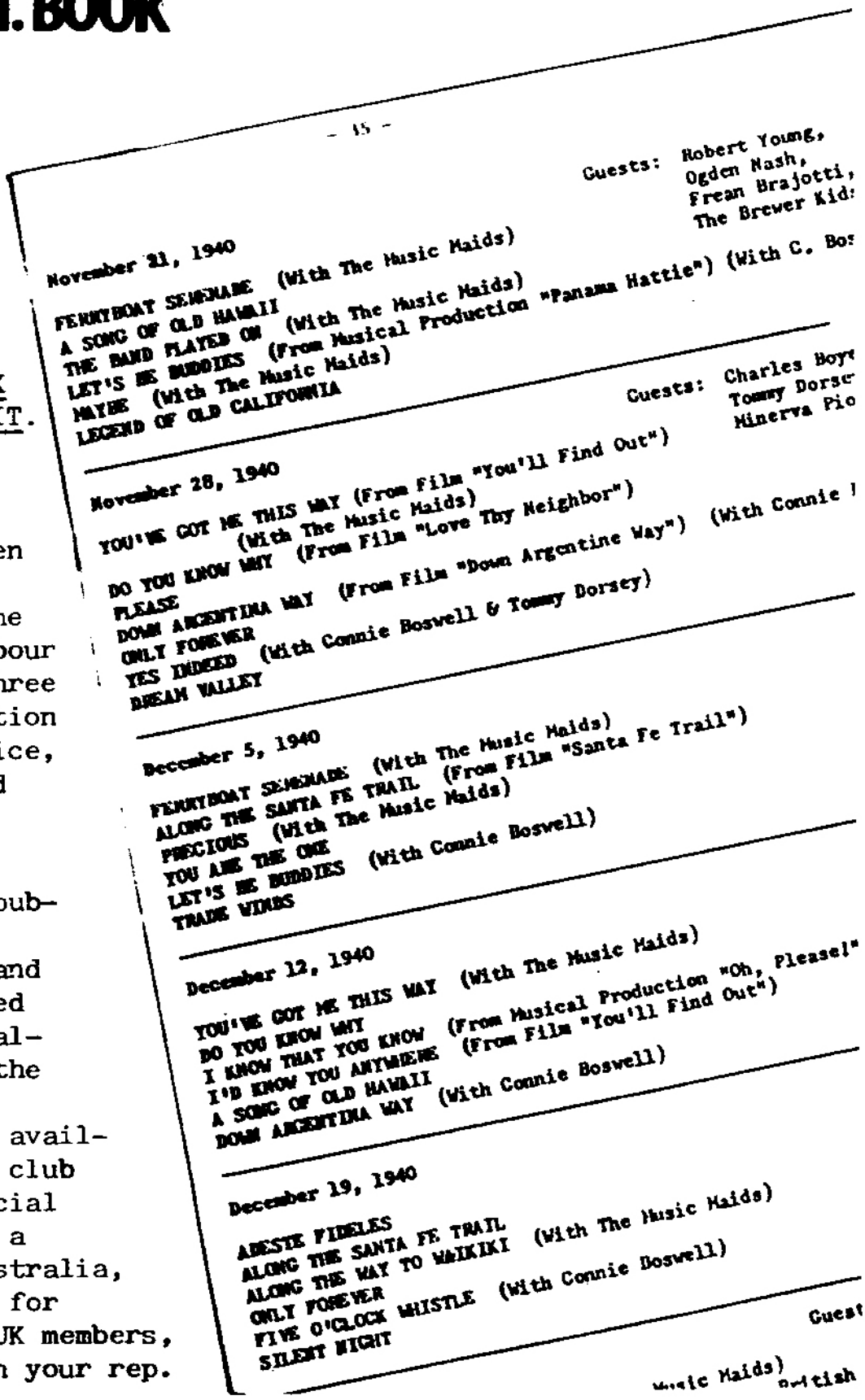
Not much of interest on the local record scene. After re-issuing a handful of the old Festival/MCA issues last year, WEA don't appear to have done much else with their Crosby catalogue. Pre-Christmas, the only new disc on thd shelves was another re-issue of Bing's Christmas album recorded for Warner Brothers back in 1962. It's a good album, but was re-issued only a few years ago anyway.

THE K.M.H. BOOK

HAVE YOU BOUGHT YOUR COPY OF THE KMH LISTINGS BOOK YET? DON'T MISS IT.

This list of 385 Kraft Music Hall Broadcasts between Dec 5, 1935 and May 9, 1946 is the result of the labour of many hands, three deserving of mention being Edward A Rice, Howard Levine and Vern Taylor.

This Society has assisted in the publication of this remarkable list and last year produced one-hundred spiral-bound copies of the work.
The book is only available through the club for the very special price of Au$5.00 a copy. Within Australia, please add $2.00 for postage. US and UK members, please check with your rep.



- 45 -

November 21, 1940 — Guests: Robert Young, Ogden Nash, Frean Brajotti, The Brewer Kid:

FERRYBOAT SERENADE (With The Music Maids)
A SONG OF OLD HAWAII
THE BAND PLAYED ON (With The Music Maids)
LET'S BE BUDDIES (From Musical Production "Panama Hattie") (With C. Bo:
MAYBE (With The Music Maids)
LEGEND OF OLD CALIFORNIA

November 28, 1940 — Guests: Charles Boye Tommy Dorse Minerva Pio

YOU'VE GOT ME THIS WAY (From Film "You'll Find Out")
DO YOU KNOW WHY (With The Music Maids)
PLEASE (From Film "Love Thy Neighbor")
DOWN ARGENTINA WAY (From Film "Down Argentine Way") (With Connie
ONLY FOREVER
YES INDEED (With Connie Boswell & Tommy Dorsey)
DREAM VALLEY

December 5, 1940

FERRYBOAT SERENADE (With The Music Maids)
ALONG THE SANTA FE TRAIL (From Film "Santa Fe Trail")
PRECIOUS (With The Music Maids)
YOU ARE THE ONE
LET'S BE BUDDIES (With Connie Boswell)
TRADE WINDS

December 12, 1940

YOU'VE GOT ME THIS WAY (With The Music Maids)
DO YOU KNOW WHY
I KNOW THAT YOU KNOW (From Musical Production "Oh, Please!"
I'D KNOW YOU ANYWHERE (From Film "You'll Find Out")
A SONG OF OLD HAWAII
DOWN ARGENTINA WAY (With Connie Boswell)

December 19, 1940

ADESTE FIDELES
ALONG THE SANTA FE TRAIL
ALONG THE WAY TO WAIKIKI (With The Music Maids)
ONLY FOREVER
FIVE O'CLOCK WHISTLE (With Connie Boswell)
SILENT NIGHT

Guest

Music Maids)
Scottish

THE VINTAGE RECORD SHOP

Old 78's, rare LP's, sheet music, etc - all are available at The Vintage Record Shop, 159 Ormond Road, Elwood (phone 531 3938). Peter Murphy's shop is usually open Monday - Thursday from 5.30pm to 7.30 pm and Saturdays and Sundays from 12 to 5 pm. Best to ring and make sure that Peter will be open first.

LP's at a discount

Two of Melbourne's record shops offer discounts to members. These are: The Bentleigh Sewing and Record Centre, 348 Centre Road, Bentleigh (ph 557 1050) and Cunninghams Hi-Fi and Records Centre, 80 Church St, Brighton. (Ph 592 2066).

COLOUR PHOTOS OF BING

Frank Murphy operates the Bing Crosby Photo Club out of the U.K. and issues many colour photos of Bing every year to members. Cost p.a. is £3.00 to join (UK), £4 (continent), £8.00 (overseas). When you join, you receive three photographs plus two photographic badges. Write to Frank direct. 32 Ferndale Avenue, Wallsend, Tyne and Wear, NE 28 7NE, U.K.

BING TAPES

Arnold Baker, 48 Groomsport Road, Bangor, Co Down, Northern Ireland, BT20 5LR, has over a hundred different Crosby cassettes for sale, covering about everything you can imagine. One Australian member was so delighted that he ordered <u>everything</u> in Arnold's catalogue!

BING DISCOGRAPHY

If you have even a small collection of records, you must have a copy of 'Bing - Just For the Record'. It lists every commercial issue of Bing's from 1926 to 1977, in both alphabetical and chronological order. It's invaluable for dating your records. Write for details of cost to John Joyce (Bookbinders), Saltmeadows Road, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear, NE 28 AH3, England. It would be nice to include a couple of International reply coupons, available from your Post Office, with any enquiry. Return postage is so <u>very</u> expensive these days.

LETTERS

From Les O'Donnell, Queensland

Just a short note to tell you how much I enjoyed the videpocassette of the songs from Bing's films. I would like to thank all concerned with the making of it.

From Howard Levine, Florida

There was a tremendous amount of work involved in putting the Kraft Music Hall listing together, to say nothing of typing it when the research was finsihed. There was a whole lot more than merely taking notes from Ed Rice's taped voice reading from John Scott Trotter's log. That was the basis for the list, but then the work really began. I was happy to do it, but I'm not sorry that its over.

From Don Haizelden, London

The last time I visited the Wandsworth Record Fair (the best record fair in the UK for 78's) here in London, I was offered an Australian record by a dealer who said it was Bing under a different name. I took the dealer's address and then dismissed it as a phoney. But I read the advert in your magazine for the Owen Cornell record and the mention of the Arthur Beaumont, so I got in touch with the dealer who turned out to be a well known Bing collector and I have now obtained the Arthur Beaumont of "I Found a Million Dollar Baby", thansk to your magazine.

From Richard Pearson, Arlington

(Whilst in London last year, Richard attended the Crosby gettogether. His report:) There were probably more than a few VBCS members among the British attendees. Also the three independant record producers were there: John Joyce, Bob Jones and John McNicholas. Of course everyone was excited about John's project. Reg Bristo was given a special award for all the hard work and dedication to the I.C.C. he ha6 provided as secretary and editor of 'Bing' magazine, the Society's quarterly publication. Reg was presented with a clock which was converted from an old Bruncwick 78. Although I didn't have the opportunity to view in close up, it appeared to be a very beautiful gift, and I'm sure Reg will treasure it always. So many fans took home some nice records and other collectibles. The tribute lasted from 3 pm til 10.30 pm and I'm sure everyone enjoyed themselves immensely.

PHILIP BRADY'S SCENE

BING Crosby is somehow synonymous with the Christmas and holiday season. Fans of Bing, who died on a golf course in Madrid on October 14, 1977, will be fascinated to know that ALL his recordings are being re-released on LP albums in choronogical order, starting with I've Got The Girl from 1926. Bing recorded more than 2000 songs in a career spanning more than 50 years. The big news for Bing buffs is that the LPs will feature every "take" of every song, including fluffs, wrong notes and false starts. The first two albums are available from Bob Machliss of the Victorian Bing Crosby Society. The discs have been dubbed in England from mint-condition 78s and I'm told by fans that the LPs are "fabulous." If you are a Crosby collector, you can find out about the complete Crosby set by writing to Bob Machliss, PO Box 422, South Melbourne 3205. You also might like to become a member of the society. Members meet regularly to view old Crosby movies, swap records and listen to vintage Bing. In addition, the society puts out a magazine, The Crosby Voice. Who said Bing was dead?

(This beaut write-up resulted in a number of new members and many enquiries for the "Chronological Bing Crosby" series. Many thanks, Phil.)

I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas

(The cover illustration from another of the 'Bing Crosby' cards I received last Christmas.)

VIDEO NEWS

OTHER VIDEO'S FOR SALE

In addition to the "Rare Moments With Bing Crosby" tape we have for sale, we have access to most of Bing's 30's and a few of his 40's movies. These are for sale to Australian members for modest cost on both VHS and Beta. Please write for details.

VIDEO'S YOU CAN BORROW

Last issue we announced that there were now THREE VHS tapes containing all the musical highlights of Bing's features from his first to his last (but not "Here Is My Heart", "Top O' the Morning" or "Man on Fire"). These tapes are identified as VIDEO 1, VIDEO 2 and VIDEO 3. Perhaps we scared off prospective borrowers by saying that there would be a long wait for orders. Although there are still several people waiting for VIDEO 1, Numbers 2 and 3 have only one or two orders waiting. Cost is $5 ($3 borrowing fee plus $2 postage). Please write listing one tape only.

BITS 'N' PIECES

* Sad to note the passing of Leo Robin, 89. Leo, with a string of other composers, contibuted many of Bing's early hits. Sad also to note the passing of Matt Monroe, a crooner in the Crosby style.

* Rumour has it that three new Books on Bing are in the works. We await developments with interest.

* MCA in the USA are collecting all the tracks Bob Hope recorded for Decca and issuing them on an LP. These go back to "Thanks for the Memory" and include a few duets with Bing. May be out already.

* Interested in collecting sheet music? Then subscribe to The Sheet Music Exchange, PO Box 2136, Winchester, Va 22601, USA. Cost per issue is Au$3.50. Write Pat Cleveland, Editor, for details.

* U.K. Members, now that Keith Parkinson is our Rep in your country, we are happy to announce that we can lower dramatically the sub. figures announced last year. The new figure is a reasonable £8.00 per annum. Keith will receive all the news letters by SAL mail, then re-mail them to members in the UK at local postal rates. It may take a few weeks longer, but will save you a fortune! Members who paid the higher rates, will have their subs adjusted automatically

*Sad to note the passing of highly respected U.S. Collector, Jimmy Johnson.

From Ken Twiss, The Bing Crosby Historical Society.

We hope that a commemorative stamp will be approved soon. Then I will write to many countries to ask if they can issue a Bing Crosby stamp in 1987.B.C.H.S is the US outlet for the Chronological Bing Set of records. The records are very good. (The address: PO Box 8013, Tacoma, Washington, 98408.)

From John McNicholas, producer of "The Chronological Bing Crosby"

Volume 3 will be ready February 1st, Volume 4 for March/April and volumes 5 and 6 for later in the year. I have recently made contact with a top class photographer who says that the few Bing/Whiteman photos that I have can be vastly improved. So I'm hoping that presentation for future issues will be of an even higher standard.

From Norman Wolfe, Atlantaa Ga

While playing golf at St Andrews last September, I stopped in for tea at one of the hotels bordering the 18th hole of the old course. In the display case in the lobby, I was startled to find a bust of Bing (and a pretty good one at that) with straw hat and bow tie, and standing maybe 15 inches high. Very excited, I enquired about it and was told it was owned by one of the shops in the village and could be purchased from them. I immediately went to the shop and made a deal on the spot. Although it cost about one hundred pounds, it was well worth it. The bust was produced in West Germany and was the last of a small lot available.
Then I became concerned about shipping it; so concerned that I wound up carrying it under my arm, through Scotland, England and Ireland and back to the United States. It now occupies place of honour behind the bar in my Summer home in Atlanta.
P.S. Downside is that I hated to take it away from the lobby where so many could see it! P.P.S. Of course, I had a great time explaining to the various customs people what was in the box!

From Mark Tocher, 785 Hanlon Rd,Guelph, Ontario N1G 2S6 , Canada

I do believe that my list of songs that Bing whistled in is correct. I spent the majority of my recovery period after a very serious illness, compiling it from my collection. I would welcome any correspondence from Club members regarding the list. I would also like to hear from anyone regarding any omissions.

✪ COLLECTORS' CORNER ✪

"THOSE WERE THE DAYS" by Bill Brill

Australian pressings on shellac have always fascinated me and given me the most pleasure as a collector. They were the best quality recordings issued anywhere in the world, mainly because a less-noisy shellac was used. Of course we paid for this quality - our records cost double the price of similiar issues in the USA and England. We also managed to produce the rarest labels and most "nom de plume" Bing issues, and it is about these recordings that the balance of this article is about.

Probably the rarest Australian labels were the Brunswicks. There were just two of these! "Out of Nowhere" (matrix B6089 - same as U.S. Brunswick), backed by "I Surrender Dear" sung by Nick Lucas who was a big seller here at the time, and "If You Should Ever Need Me" (matrix B6090), backed by another Lucas recording, "Warbash Moon". Both records were pressed by an independant company, Brunswick Balke Collender Company (with USA rights), in Scotchmen Street, Fitzroy, Melbourne. Around this time, the E.M.I. Company in England obtained the rights to release U.S. Brunswicks, a right which automatically extended to Australia. This being the case, Brunswick Balke could suddenly no longer use Bing's name or the Brunswick label. They solved their problem by changing "Brunswick" to "Panachord" and "Bing Crosby" to "Owen Cornell"! Two records were issued under this nom de plume: "I Found a Million Dollar Baby (opposite), matrix LA 1043, label P11981B, backed by "As Long As You're There" by Hervey Powell, a nom de plume for Seger Ellis, AND "I'm Through With Love", matrix LA 1024, label P11982B.

Despite rumours to the contrary, these records remained on sale for about 12 months. In the USA, the Woolworth Department Stores were using "Million Dollar Baby" as their theme song, and the Coles chain

here, which ran a similiar operation, decided to do the same. Panachord was approached to press "Million Dollar Baby", and as "Embassy" was their key brand of merchandise, it became the name for the label, while Bing became "Arthur Beaumont". (The matrix number was the same as the US number, ie 6140, and the label no. was E144A). On the reverse was a number called "How The Time Can Fly" (matrix 12204) by the Red Nicols Orchestra under the nom de plume "The Broadway Orchestra". (Still with us? It gets even more involved!)
Next thing to happen was that EMI took over Brunswick Balke here and released the last wax that the independant had rights to: "Dancing In the Dark", on Panachord but under Bing's name! Matrix used was E37086, label no P12151-B and the backing was "Thank You Father" by Harry Richman. (I shall always be grateful to my "old" friend ("old" in the nicest way) Les Saynor for providing me with a copy of the latter which completed the above set for me.) Then, as fate would have it, the Panachord-Brunswick-Embassy factory burnt down and no further pressings were made. However, there was one un-released test-pressings on Panachord which escaped. An edited 10" version of "Gems From George White's Scandals" (featuring Owen Cornell) which began with Bing's solos on each side. Very very few copies ever surfaced for collectors.

BING'S UNKNOWN HMV'S!!!!!
Opposite you can see a remarkable label. The roughly typed title identifies this as "Special Pressing - Bing Crosby - Love Me Tonight (C8640)". Note the label is HMV but any collector knows that "Love Me Tonight" was recorded for Brunswick.
What happened was that in the confusion surrounding the rights to titles between EMI and Panachord during the takeover period, six test pressings were made by EMI on the HMV label. The other five were "Shadows on the Window", "How Long Will it Last", "Happy Go Lucky You", "With Summer Coming On" and

"We're a Couple of Soldiers". All matrix numbers were the same as US equivalents and none of these records were released in Australia.

THE AUSTRALIAN ARNHEIM'S

Several of Bing's Gus Arnheim recordings were issued in Australia. One was on the Zonophone label (which unfortunately comes up very badly in black and white) -"Wrap Your Troubles in Dreams" (matrix 130998 - take 2, Label EE261), backed by Australian Aboriginal singer Harold Blair's "Wedding Bells Are Ringing For Sally". Some years later, the same record was re-issued on Regal Zonophone. Five other Arnhein sides were issued here, but all on HMV:
"Ho Hum!" (see opposite), matrix A61091 - take 2, backed by "I'm Gonna Get You", matrix A61091 - take 2.
"Little Things in Life", matrix PB6105 - take 7, backed with "Them There Eyes", matrix PB61057 - take 3, both issued on label EA856.
"It Must Be True" - matrix PB 61048 - take 3, backed by "Hurt" by Leo Reisman Orch, both issued on label EA 875.

THE AUSTRALIAN PARLOPHONES

Six early songs featuring Bing were issued on the purple and gold label. "If I Had You" (opposite) Sam Lanin Orch,

matrix 401557C, label A2737, backed by "All By Yourself In the Moonlight" (Billy Hay's Orch, no Bing). "My Kinda Love" with the Dorsey Bros Orch - matrix 401562, label A 2858, backed by "Now I'm in Love (Sam Lanin, no Bing). "The Spell of the Blues" with the Dorsey Bros again - matrix 401560, label A 2738, backed by "Carolina Moon" (Carolina Club Orch, no Bing). "Susianna" with Sam Lanin, matrix 401556B, label A2790, backed by "The One I Love Loves Me" (Sam Lanin with Smith Ballew vocal). And finally, "I'm Crazy Over You" with the Lanin group, matrix 401555B, label A2747, backed by "There's a Four Leaf Clover in my Pocket" (Fred 'Sugar' Hall).

THE RAREST AUSTRALIAN COLUMBIA

The rarest Australian issue on black and gold Columbia is "I'LL GET BY" featuring Bing with the Ipana Troubadors. (SEE BELOW). Matrix number us 147545 - take 3, and label number is 01674, backed by "Outside" (Jan Garber Orch, no Bing). To my knowledge, only one copy has ever been found on mainland Australia. For my copy, I am greatly indebted to my friend Ken Orren, who found a copy in the island state of Tasmania, many years ago. Ken generously gave it to me as a Christmas present. I wonder if he remembers?

THE WARTIME COLUMBIA'S

During World War 2, three 10" 78 rpm shellacs were pressed by Columbia here for the Department of the Treasury (USA). These featured songs sung by Bing in wartime morale boosting movie shorts, and transferred to disc to be played in theatres at interval to encourage patrons to buy war bonds.

The titles were "Buy a Bond" matrix S1771, label PR 969, backed by "Let's Finish the Job" (W. Christensen Orch, no Bing); "We Have Another Bond to Buy", matrix S1791, single sided disc, and finally, "Buy another Bond Today". (see opposite page), matrix S 1713, single sided disc.

Although these records were supposed to be returned to the War Dept, not too many actually did get back, mainly because of a fella named...now what was his name? Les...Say no?... Send more?...Saynor! who worked for Hoyts Albert Park Cinema at the time!

THE RAREST NON-COMMERCIALS

The rarest non-commercial Australian pressings are on KINELAB Motion Picture Sound Dept shellacs. Featuring extracts from the latest movie soundtracks, the exact number of releases from the Sydney-based Kinelab Company is unknown. However, confirmed Crosby issues are:

HERE COME THE WAVES, double-sided 12" 78 rpm. Side 1 - "Accentuate the Positive", matrix MX25469. Side 2 - "I Promise You", matrix MX 25468.

TOP O' THE MORNING (see opp) double-sided 10" 78 rpm. Side 1 - "Top O' the Morning", matrix MX29989. Side 2 - "The Donovans", matrix MX29990.

ROAD TO RIO, double-sided 12" 78 rpm. Side 1 - "Apalachacola Fla", matrix MX27630. Side 2 - "You Don't Have to know the Language", MX 27631.

GOING MY WAY, single-sided 12" 78 rpm. Song - "The Day After Forever", matrix MX 23757.

WELCOME STRANGER, double sided 12" 78 rpm. Side 1 - "My Heart is a Hobo", "Smile Right Back at the Sun". Matrix MX26972. Side 2 - "Country Style", matrix MX26973.

ROAD TO SINGAPORE, single-sided 12" 78 rpm. Song - "Captain Custard" duet with Bob Hope. Matrix MX 14732.

There are also three 16" 33⅓ Kinelab transcriptions. Each features the songs plus some of the dialogue from the film concerned. The programme is held together with narration by Philip Lewis.

DIXIE, matrix MX C71.

EMPEROR WALTZ, matrix MX C94.

A CONNECTICUT YANKEE, matrix MX C137.

If any of your readers know of further KINELAB pressings featuring Bing, perhaps they could write to The Crosby Voice with details.

AND FINALLY, A MYSTERY.

Earlier in this article, we mentioned that the Australian Embassy release of "I Found A Million Dollar Baby" was backed by a Loring (Red) Nichols recording of a song called "How the Time Can Fly".

Bing also recorded this song in 1931 (on the same day as he recorded "Many Happy Returns of the Day") although the recording was rejected. Over the page we show the original ARTISTS CARD and SELECTION CARD which show that this was the case. (The Selection Card also shows the Red Nichols recording which was released.)

However, we also have access to the COUPLINGS card which shows that at some time, "How the Time Can Fly" was apparently coupled with "At Your Command". This is also shown over page. However, no copy of this record has ever been found. I wonder if anyone will ever turn up a Panachord shellac of this lost record.

I hope that your readers enjoy this article. In my day, having the original on shellac was the thing, but of course, LP records have changed all that, despite the loss of quality from the removal of hiss, the diabolical addition of echo and the lowering of speed from 78 to 33⅓. To me, when you play a mint condition shellac, it still sounds better to me than any reissue. Bill Brill.

ARTISTS CARD

BING CROSBY

e Made	SELECTION	Master No.	Record No.	Date in Production	
:0/31	(1) OUT OF NOWHERE ✓	LA 983	6090 L	C1992 Spec	
30/31	(2) IF YOU SHOULD EVER NEED ME	LA 984	6090 L	C1992 Spec.Ntl.	
/4/31	(3) WERE YOU SINCERE?	LA 1036	6120 L	C 2033	6/25/31
'4/31 ✓	(4) JUST ONE MORE CHANCE !	LA 10[illegible]	6120 L	C 2033	6/25/31
12/31	(5) I'M THRU WITH LOVE	LA 1024	6140 L	List	9/6/31
2/31 ✓	(6) I FOUND A MILLION DOLLAR BABY ✓	LA 1043	6140 L	List	8/6/31
12/31	(7) MANY HAPPY RETURNS OF THE DAY	LA 1042	6145 L	C2087-Ntl	8/20/
12/31	(8) HOW THE TIME CAN FLY	LA 1044		W 5957	REJECTED
/24/31 ✓	(9) AT YOUR COMMAND	LA 1051	6145 L	C2087-Ntl	
'19/31 ✓	(10) I APOLOGIZE				

FORM 127

SELECTION CARD

Name of Selection HOW THE TIME CAN FLY---Donaldson, Douglas & Cumble (Whenever I'm With You)

Date Made	Master No.	Record No.	Date in Production	Date Released	Classification	ARTIST
6/11/31	E 36857	6164 N			Fox Trot with Vocal Chorus 4M	LORING NICHOLS and HIS ORCHESTRA
6/12/31	LA 1044		W 5957	REJECTED	Vocal with Orchestra 4 M	BING CROSBY

COUPLINGS

NAME	Master No.	
(1) IF YOU SHOULD EVER NEED ME	LA 984	BING CROSBY
(2) OUT OF NOWHERE	LA 983	" "
(3) JUST ONE MORE CHANCE	LA 1037	" "
(4) WERE YOU SINCERE?	LA 1036	" "
(5) I FOUND A MILLION DOLLAR BABY	LA 1043	" "
(6) I'M THRU WITH LOVE	LA1024	" "
(7) HOW THE TIME CAN FLY (8) AT YOUR COMMAND new coupling	LA 1044 LA 1051	" "
(9) MANY HAPPY RETURNS OF THE DAY reccupled	LA 1042	" "
(10) SWEET AND LOVELY	LA 1042	" "
	E 37156	" "

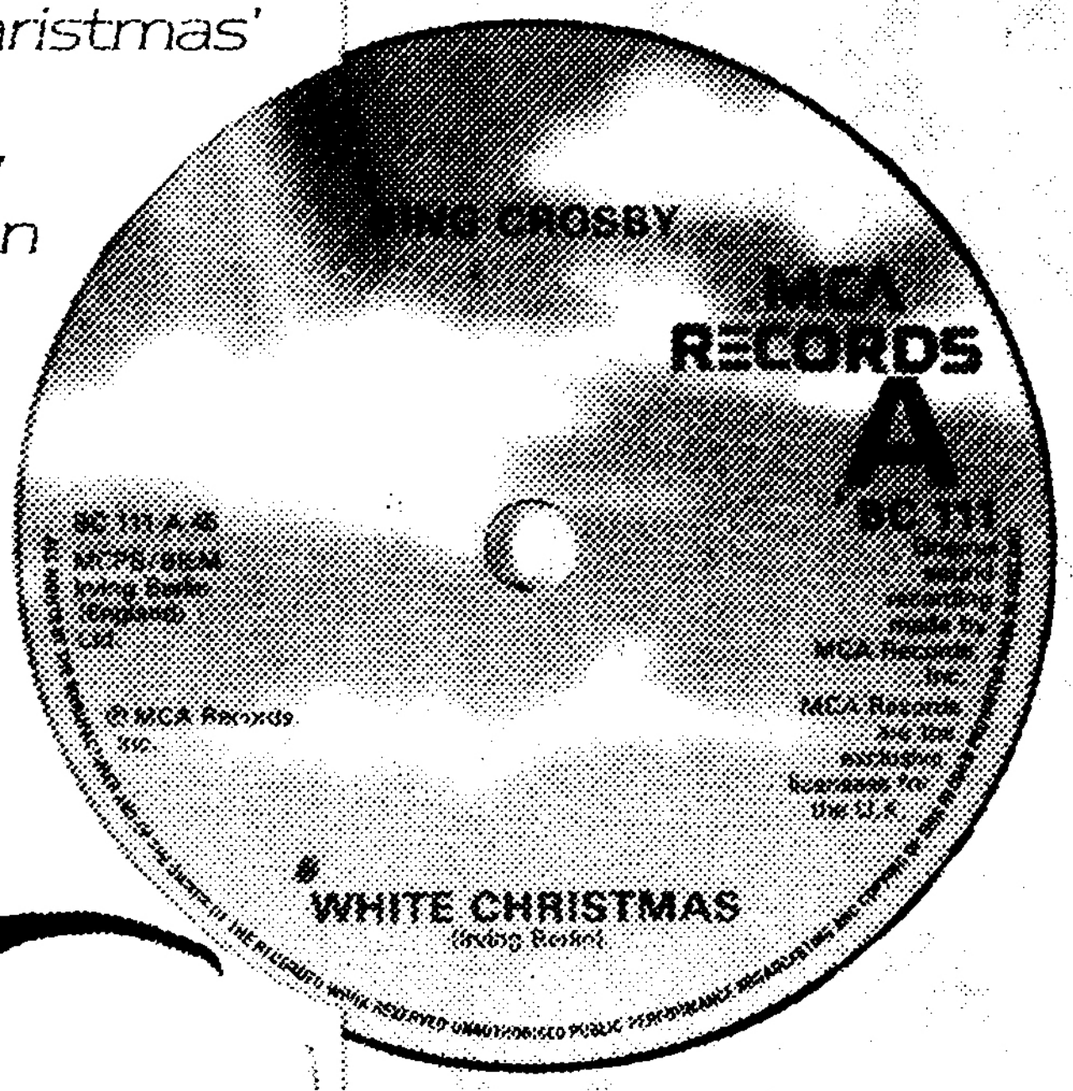
I'M DREAMING OF A WHITE CHRISTMAS

We received a remarkable collection of Bing Crosby orientated Christmas Cards last December, and some are reproduced elsewhere in the magazine. But this one takes the cake! A large, fold-open card, it carries this pleasant scene on the front, which opens to:

The greatest selling record to date is 'White Christmas' by Irving Berlin.

The Bing Crosby version recorded on May 29th 1942 sold 25,000,000.

Your copy of this famous single is one of a special pressing done exclusively for Studio Cards.



...an actual 45 rpm record of White Christmas tucked into a sleeve!

I'm dreaming of a White Christmas
With every Christmas card I write
May your day be merry and bright
And may all your Christmases be white

Many thanks to the UK member who sent this one to us. A great surprise.

WELL, WE FINALLY RECEIVED A COPY - AND IT WAS WORTH THE WAIT!

But we didn't get it from the publisher! Our copy came from the USA thanks to the kindness of Ken Twiss of the Bing Crosby Historical Society. For some reason, the publishing company (based in Ireland), are showing absolutely no inclination to operate a mail-order service on this book. Theyresolutely ignore our letters and give one the impression that they'd rather forget about the whole thing! Very odd.

WHAT SORT OF BOOK IS "BING - A VOICE FOR ALL SEASONS"?

Member Sheldon O'Connell has put together a very readable, very entertaining tribute to Bing in this long-awaited publication.

After a Foreward by Rich Little and an Introduction by Phil Harris, we trace Bing's career from his early days, through vaudeville, the Whiteman orchestra, and into radio. There are some great early photos including a rare picture of Bing as a pall bearer at Russ Columbo's funeral!

There's a chapter on the KMH broadcasts and another on Bing's early films. Throughout, the book abounds in anecdotes by Bing and about Bing and the people he knew. There are also long dialogue passages from various radio broadcasts, which are a very evocative way to present those old shows.

"Bing - A Voice For All Seasons" also gives a detailed coverage of the years after Bing's passing, and the various Crosby groups (including ours! Thanks Sheldon) that are active in the world today, in particular the Bing Crosby Historical Society.

There's a chapter on some of the better-known collectors around and another on the 1983 Crosby Auction. In fact, if it's to do with Bing, you'll find it covered somewhere in the book.

The final forty-odd pages are devoted to reprinting the Discography from "Bing Just For the Record" which is sold by John Joyce in the U.K. , plus a list of Bingfs film appearances.

It's a super little book and one that deserves to be in your collection. The only problem, as I said at the start, is finding someone to sell you a copy!!!

Try the publishers if you like. You may have more luck than I did. Write to "The Kerryman", Tralee, Co Kerry, Ireland. And if you get anywhere, let me know, and I'll be happy to write up your success in these pages.

Australian pair join Crosby in search for fame and fortune

Golf is my game — TOM RAMSEY

AN expensive journey to the PGA qualifying school at La Manga in Southern Spain by Australians Lyndsay Stephen and Wayne Riley resulted in their winning cards to compete in this year's all-exempt European Tour.

Altogether 50 players in the field of 403 won cards — and all 50 were under-par for the marathon 108-hole affair which had been preceded by a 36-hole qualifying event.

Stephen, from Western Australia, finished strongly with a pair of 69's to shoot 415, three strokes behind leader, American Robert Wrenn. Riley, who you may recall lead the British Open qualifiers at Ladybank last July and won the Victorian PGA title before leaving for Spain, shot 419.

Stephen and Riley were forced to make the costly trip because they failed to finish among the top 125 money winners on last year's European Tour. And as this is the first year of the "all exempt" circuit it was their one and only chance to compete in Europe this year. The foreign entry was 142, with 44 players from America.

Sensation

And among the Americans was a young golfer nobody figured would ever play the professional game — the late Bing Crosby's son, Nathanial.

Nathanial Crosby, left, son of the late Bing Crosby, won the US Amateur title in 1982 wearing a treasured necklace which he rubbed in times of stress to bring him luck

He finished in the dark the final day but qualified with a score of 424. Crosby won the US Amateur title in 1982, 41 years after his father had played in the event, and as a wealthy young man who now controls the tournament his father started, the Bing Crosby National Pro-Am at Pebble Beach, he is obviously not playing for the prizemoney.

"No, golf is a passion. I just want to see how far I can go in the game," he says.

Well, Jack Nicklaus turned professional after winning two US Amateurs . . . "I'll never be a Nicklaus, but . . . I'd kinda like to win the Crosby," said Nathaniel, touching a necklace.

Therein lies a story.

At the peak of his career as an entertainer in the 1930's and 1940's, Bing Crosby played a very respectable game of golf. He entered the US Amateur title on several occasions.

In the 1940 title he was among 16 players competing for four places in sectional qualifying at the Bel Air Country Club in Los Angeles.

Crosby shot 152 for the 36 holes, the same score, by the way, as Randolph Scott, the movie star. Their scores were the sixth best. But later in the day a qualifier withdrew and Scott said he would not make the trip to Winged Foot in New York to play. So Crosby was given the last spot in the 150-man field.

Needless to say his presence created a sensation. Crowds swarmed around him, and he found it difficult to play his shots. New York State Troopers were called in to protect Crosby and his two playing companions.

When Crosby, understandably, shot 83 in the first round, it was obvious that he would have to do considerably better the next day if he were to be among the 64 who qualified for match-play. The crowd was larger and police were forced to use long bamboo poles normally used to sweep dew in the morning to form a box around the three players so they could move through the gallery. Crosby shot 77 with a seven on the last hole, missing qualifying by five strokes. His two playing companions made it.

Crosby did not play in another amateur title, but he cherished the player identification badge he wore that week and stored it among his keepsakes. Some years ago it was made into a necklace.

When Nathaniel won the 1982 US Amateur at the Olympic Club in San Francisco, he wore that badge around his neck. In times of stress, he reached for it and rubbed it with his fingers, much as Aladdin with his magic lamp.

It had the same effect; in a field stocked not only with members of the Walker Cup teams of both the US and Great Britain and Ireland, but also with America's best amateurs, the 19-year-old Crosby won 19 matches.

Nathaniel has been close to golf all his life. He remembers seeing pictures of himself with a golf club in his hand at three or four years of age, but, he says, he did not really hit a ball until he was about seven.

He has a good swing. Former PGA champion Bob Rosburg says if he has a weakness it is lack of length.

Another former PGA champion, Dave Marr, says no matter what happens now that he has entered the professional ranks, nobody will ever be able to take away from young Crosby that his name is on a trophy with Jones and Quimet and Littler and Nicklaus and Palmer and all the great players.

"To me, for Nathaniel to win the US Amateur after all that his father did for everyone who's played golf, was the nicest victory I have ever seen," Marr said.

"It was almost spooky, you know, the way he would rub that medal that his father wore back in 1940. Then he would pull off a great shot under the most intense kind of pressure. It was almost eerie. You could just feel something in the air."

Crosby is now 22. He is among five players to win the US Amateur before their 20th birthdays. Despite his youth, he is a remarkably poised young man, as well he might be. His mother, Kathy Crosby, was an actress, as is his sister, Mary, who won her share of fame in the television show Dallas, and his father is part of theatrical history.

Ben Crenshaw, who is one of young Crosby's best friends, says: "He is a fierce competitor and he has a great capacity for learning — and they are two big pluses.

And the same might be said for Lyndsay Stephen and Wayne Riley. Along with Crosby they have graduated from the European qualifying school of December '84.

They are three young men whose stories are unfinished, and I look forward to following and reporting their careers for *The Australian*.

THE WEEKEND AUSTRALIAN
January 5-6 1985

★ ★ ★

Hope visits former home of father

Comedian **Bob Hope** paid a nostalgic visit Monday to a house where his father once lived in Barry, Wales, and said his mother, like most Welsh people, was a good singer "and I guess that's why I got into show business."

The 81-year-old comedian, in Britain for a tour of shows in provincial cities, stopped in Barry en route to his Monday night show in Cardiff and had tea at No. 12 Greenwood St. with **Raymond** and **Nancy Davis**, the retired couple who have lived in the three-bedroom house since 1936.

"The house is exactly as I expected it to be," Hope said as he posed for photos near the plaque noting his connection with the building. His father lived there in 1890, and he met and married a Welsh woman from around the corner. They had moved to London when Hope was born in 1903 and later moved to Cleveland, Ohio.

Hope recalled that his old sidekick, the late **Bing Crosby**, was half Scottish. "I am half Welsh, so we're about even now," he joked.

THAT CROSBY WHISTLE!

U.S. member Mark Tocher has compiled this, the first comprehensive list I have seen of records in which Bing whistles. That Crosby whistle was, of course, an integral part of the Crosby magic. Bing had one of the most musical whistles I've ever heard on record (don't write! I know there were others). Al Jolson's was more dynamic, but Bing's was, I think, more lyrical. When you look down the list, you can see that up to the 1960's, hardly a year passed without at least one Crosby record featuring that famous whistle. Congratulations to Mark for this fascinating piece of research.

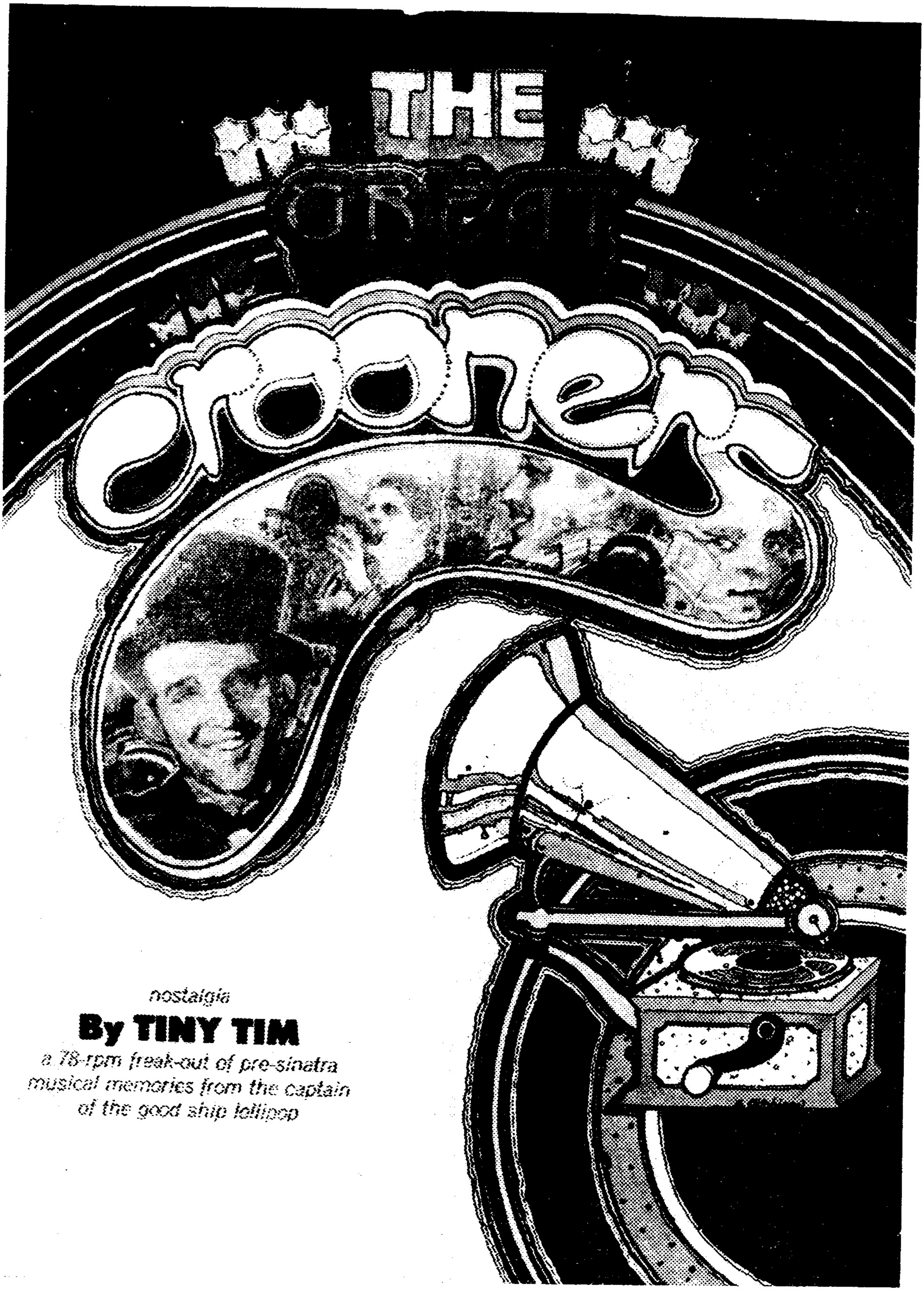
1926 -
1927 -
1928 - From Monday On (The Rhythm Boys)
- It was the dawn of love
1929 - I kiss your hand madame
- Gay Love
1930 - It must be true
1931 - Wrap your troubles in dreams
- Just one more chance
- Many happy returns of the day
- Stardust
- A faded summer love
- Goodnight sweetheart
- Where the blue of the night
- Can't we talk it over?
1932 - Starlight
- Shadows on the window
- Paradise
- Waltzing in a dream
- Lazy day
1932 - Please
- Just an echo in the valley
1933 - Young and healthy
- Shadow waltz
- The day you came along
- The last round-up
1934 - I'm hummin, I'm whistlin'
- Let me call you sweetheart
- Love is just around the corn
1935 - I wish I were Aladdin
- Boots and Saddles
- Moonburn
1936 - We'll rest at the end of the trail
- Robins and roses
- Me and the moon
1937 - In a little hula heaven
- My little buckeroo
- Dancing under the stars
- Sail along silvery moon
- Bob White

1938 - Silver on the sage
1939 - It must be true
- Whistling in the wildwood
- Wrap your troubles in dreams
- Girl of my dreams
- Start the day right
1940 - The girl with the pigtails in her hair
- I haven't time to be a millionaire
- Mr Meadowlark
- A song of old Hawaii
- I found a million dollar baby
- Where the blue of the night
1941 - Mary's a grand old name
- The whistler's mother-in-law
- Shepherd serenade
1942 - Lily of Laguna
- Wait til the sun shines Nellie
- White Christmas
1943 - All you want to do is dance (unlisted title)
1944 - The three caballeros
1945 - Along the Navajo trail
- Where the blue of the night
1946 -
1947 - The friendly mountains
- White Christmas
- The Chrsitmas song
- Alexanders Ragtime Band
- Blue shadows on the trail
1948 -
1949 - Wedding day
- Sunshine cake
- The last mile home
- Top O'the morning
- The legend of Sleppy Hollow (narration)
- Mule train
1950 - I didn't slip
- Accidents will happen
1951 - I whistle a happy tune
1952 - Rosaleen
- Just a little lovin'
1953 - Tenderfoot

1954 - Wrap your troubles in dreams
- Paradise
1955 -
1956 - Little one
- Blues in the night
- Honeysuckle rose
1957 - Georgia on my mind
- I'm confessin'
1958 -
1959 - Git along little dogies
- I was seeing Nellie home
- Oh dem golden slippers
- Linger awhile
- Toot toot Tootsie goodbye
1960 - Shine on harvest moon
- Listen to the mockingbird
- While strolling through the park
- Won't you come home,Bill Bailey
1961 -
1962 - Singing in the rain
- Five foot two, eyes of blue
- Cecelia
1963 - A little bitter tear
- Oh lonesome me
1964 - The poor people of paris
1964 to 1967 - nil
1968 - Where the rainbow ends
1969 to 1975 - nil
1976 - The only way to go
- Beautiful memories
1977 - April showers
- The only way to go

From "From Monday On" to "The only way to go" - that's a lot of territory and some very elegant whistling. Thank you Bing. And thank you Mark.

☆ FROM OUT OF THE PAST ☆



nostalgia

By TINY TIM

a 78-rpm freak-out of pre-sinatra musical memories from the captain of the good ship lollipop

LIKE EVERYONE ELSE who listened to radio or bought records in the Thirties, I was firmly convinced that there had never been nor ever would be singers to compare with the great crooners of the day—Bing Crosby, Russ Colombo and, the greatest of them all, in my opinion, Mr. Rudy Vallee. Backed by the big bands of the day, they generated the same kind of public excitement and, in Mr. Vallee's case, the frenzied hysteria we usually associate with the best rock groups of the present. But with the beginning of the Fifties, I suddenly discovered that the art of popular crooning had begun at least 20 years before Rudy Vallee first picked up a megaphone and that I had been missing out on the fabulous stars of vaudeville who'd taken America by the ears at the turn of the century and forced it to sit up and listen. Of course, most of them are forgotten today, but their greatness lives on in the recorded music they left behind and in the influence they had on the more memorable Thirties.

I was working at the Page Three, a night club in New York City, when I made that discovery—it was 1950. A friend played a record for me by Billy Murray—a terrific comic singer whose career ended in the mid-Twenties—and I instantly knew that I was on to something. There was a magazine published at the time called *Record Changer* that consisted mainly of lists of old 78s that were being auctioned by their owners. The readers would send in their bids and at the end of the month, the record went to the highest bidder. Well, I was so impressed with the old music I was starting to hear that I bid five or six dollars, just to make sure I got the ones I wanted. That must have been a lot of money, because I started getting answers from the magazine well before the end of the month.

Record Changer also carried commercial advertising and one ad, in particular, happened to catch my eye. It was placed by Mr. Jacob Schneider, who owned a music store near the Coliseum in New York; and when I went down there, I found that this was not only a music store but the most fantastic music store in the world. Mr. Schneider had any record you could possibly want

label and how many copies he had in stock. But they were expensive. Original Brunswick discs cost five dollars each (Mr. Crosby's records cost up to $25 today) and so did the old Columbias and Edisons. And you couldn't bargain with Mr. Schneider, either. He was a very nice man, but if you asked him to sell you a record for less, he'd kick you right out of the store. However, I did go back to see him after I made the grade and he really surprised me. "Tiny Tim," he said, "I know I used to charge you five dollars when you were broke, but now that you're wealthy, I'm only going to charge you two-fifty." I still haven't figured that out.

I also used to buy records from the Merit Music Shop. One day, the owner, Mr. Meltzer, started showing me tons and tons of new shellacs and by the time I picked the ones I wanted, the bill came to $175. The only trouble was that I was making just $40 a week at the Page Three. But Mr. Meltzer was very kind. He said, "Kid, I know you're making only $40 a week, so just give me $20 a week until you pay it off." I was desperate, so I went to the race track and prayed that one horse would come in. I must not be much of a gambler, because for the next nine weeks, I was giving Mr. Meltzer half my pay.

What records was I buying? Were they really worth the money? Well, you've got to hear not only the great crooners but pioneers such as Byron G. Harlan, Henry Burr, Arthur Fields, Irving Kaufman and Billy Murray to understand just how much they were worth to me. I sing many of their songs, but I can't really imitate them and I don't even try. It's enough for me just to feel their spirits as I sing; to know that even though most of them are gone now, I can still share something with them. After all, even as a child, I used to get a thrill just watching the shellac records spinning around on the turntable. I'd press my nose to the label and it was like magic to me. I actually felt as if I was living in the grooves—and I really haven't changed at all. Even now, when I get a big box of records, I drag them to my room, close the door, wind up my 1909 Victor phonograph (it cost $150 at Music Man Murray's in Hollywood) and listen to them straight through. Maybe I'm a living ghost of the past, but it's more than just singing to me. I go into a trance and usually end up sitting there in my room with my head lodged inside the horn of my record player.

It's like being inside a time machine. I start imagining that I can step out into the street and still see horse-drawn trolleys rolling down Broadway, Model A Fords chugging along Central Park West, actors dressed as doughboys in jodhpurs and puttees recruiting men to fight the Kaiser, angry drunks pounding on the doors of the speak-easies, and charleston contests and Wall Street suicides and mobs of screaming women lining the streets, hoping to catch a glimpse of Rudy Vallee outside the Brooklyn Paramount Theater. And all through those years—like a historical bouncing ball—popular music grew, improved, regressed, progressed, rose and fell with the changing times and tastes of the public, making superstars out of unknowns and forgotten relics out of superstars.

What started the ball rolling in the first place was a patent filed in December 1877 by Mr. Thomas Alva Edison. The first recordings were made on cylinder rolls. There were no tubes to burn out and no heat to warp the records. All you had to do was wind up the phonograph and keep a pack of needles on hand, to change them when they wore out. But by 1902, flat disc records had been invented and, even though they were a quarter of an inch thick, they were much easier to distribute and store than the cylinders had been. To hear a sound coming out of a box or a horn must have been an amazing novelty to the people in those days, and the entire music industry really flourished. Records cost from 50 cents to $1.25 and each company published catalogs of current selections that could be delivered by mail anywhere in the country. Besides the phonograph, nearly every home had a piano and the income from sheet-music sales was just as important as that from records.

Because it was such big business, music publishers were constantly besieged by composers and song pluggers hoping to peddle their tunes, and the popular singers and bandleaders received a fortune in bribes just to introduce new numbers to the public. Song pluggers frequently staged bizarre publicity stunts, literally shouting their songs from the rooftops, and one even went so far as to rent a big horse-drawn wagon that he drove through the streets with a band on board to play the song he was trying to sell. But it worked. Every dime store had a piano in its music department and either the customer or a professional demonstrator could play the song before the music was bought; and the sheets sold like hot cakes at ten cents each.

But the records—oh, the records. Today, if a group or a singer puts out three albums a year, you'd call that prolific. But in the pioneer days of the business, 1902–1925, a singer would often record two or three songs a day; and since the contracts were very short, he'd be working on as many as five or six different labels. Not only that but many of the greats recorded under countless pseudonyms and, even during the height of their careers, they had no reservations about singing in trios, quartets or even choruses —as long as they were paid, of course. For all these reasons, it's no surprise that some of the most celebrated singers, such as Henry Burr or Arthur Fields, performed on several thousand shellacs, and it's impossible today to get accurate totals of their output.

Henry Burr—a portly, well-groomed, English-banker type—is the perfect example. He recorded on Victor, Columbia and countless independent labels as Henry Burr, Irving Gillette and Harry McClaskey (his real name). He also recorded duets with more than 50 partners and was a member of the Columbia Stellar Quartet, the Lyric Trio, the Metropolitan Trio, the Sterling Trio and the famed Peerless Quartet, which in 1915 gave the world a song titled *Cows May Come and Cows May Go, but the Bull Goes on Forever.* Adding all these collaborations to his solo work, I would guess that Henry Burr performed on approximately 50,000 records from 1902 to 1930. That may be hard to believe, but don't forget that this man was one of the most popular singers of the day.

As far as I'm concerned, I would definitely include him among the earliest crooners. The sentimental nature of many of his songs and the sighing, almost crying quality in his voice made him a tremendous hit with every mother in the country. Recording such songs as *Beautiful Ohio* and *Mother* ("*M* is for the million things you gave me . . ."), he carried the sentimental-ballad tradition of the 1890s into this century, until it was finally overshadowed by the dance crazes and ragtime that grew steadily in popularity from 1910 to 1920. Apparently, those ballads were too slow and too maudlin for a faster-paced America, but I think they're well worth remembering:

If she was what she was when she was sixteen,
You'd find her again on the old village green.
She's not what she was and the reason is plain,
Instead of the straight road she took the wrong lane.
The world may reply with its scorn and complaints,
If there were no sinners, they'd never be saints;
So lift her up gently and help her go clean
Like she was when she was sixteen.

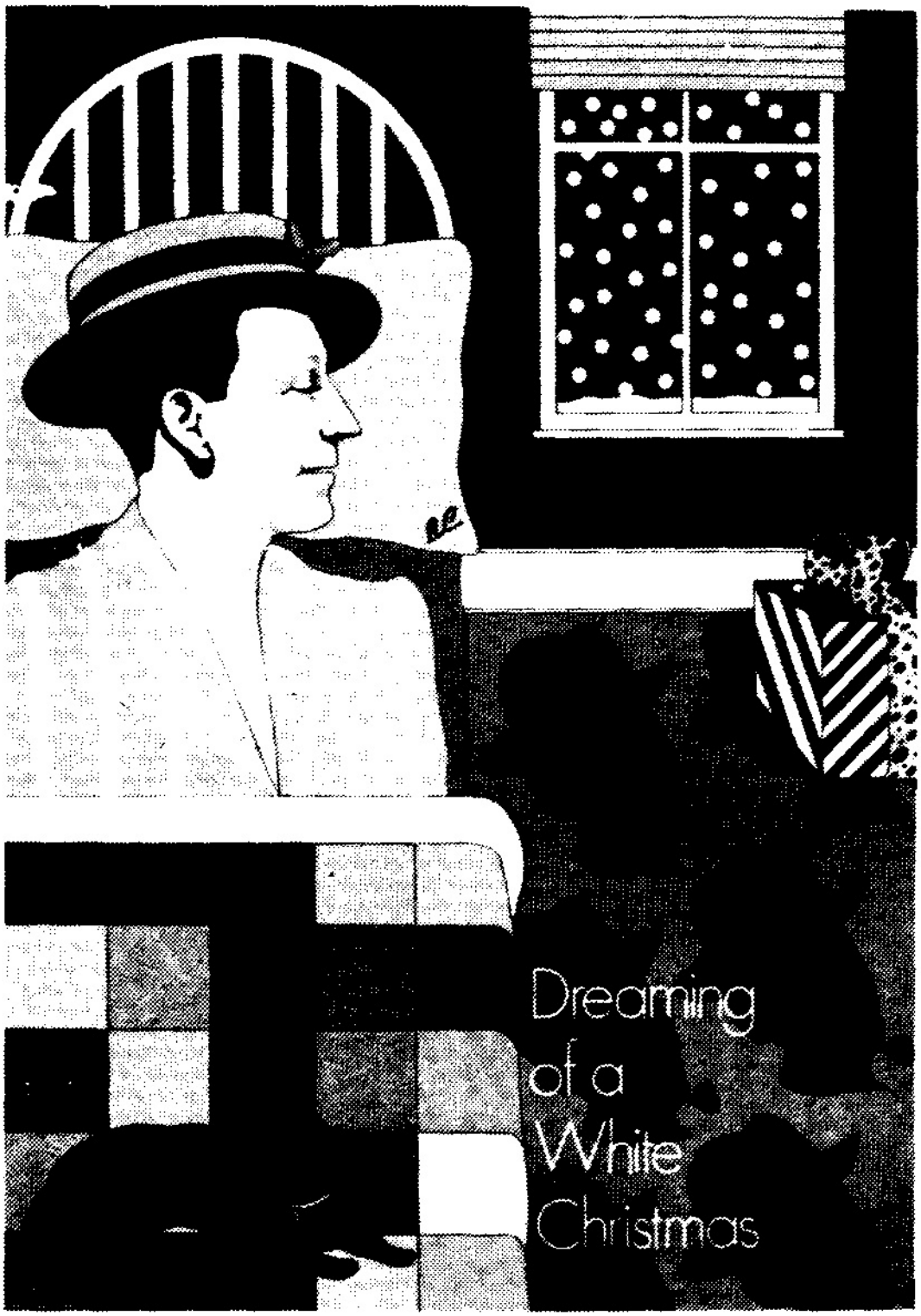
BY GEORGE MEYER, SAM LEWIS, JOE YOUNG. © 1923 BOURNE CO. COPYRIGHT RENEWED. REPRINTED BY PERMISSION.

(continued next issue)

And that's where we'll end this issue of 'The Crosby Voice'. I hope you liked it. I think it's our best yet. See you at the Club Barbecue on March 17th!

Bob Mackbee

BACK PAGE SPECIAL



(One of the most contemporary treatments of the Crosby Christmas image I've seen. This picture came from another of the Christmas cards received.)